1: Kolarz J-4 (no date) 1954 RR1 Siberia RR1

gives an optimistic picture of the Russian reindeer situation states that a new period of decline set in during the war owing to the increased slaughter for the army and inferior care of the herds resulting from the mobilization of many native herdsmen.[14] After the war the position improved but whether and when the peak figure of 1931 was reached again, is impossible to say. Such increases in the number of reindeer as there were, were brought about, it seems, by a more liberal application of the collective farm statute. Collective farm members were encouraged to own small reindeer herds privately. The maximum size of these privately owned herds is not known but cases have been mentioned of individual collective farmers having as many as 80, 90, 130, and even up to 200 reindeer each.[15]

The reindeer problem has caused difficulties to Soviet administrators not only in the purely economic sphere but also in the field of education. What is needed in the Far North is a school which would help to raise hunting and reindeer breeding to a higher level. The more enlightened Russian pedagogues are the first to admit that such a school does not exist. One of the school inspectors posted to Northern Siberia quoted, not without a certain measure of approval, a reindeer breeder who refused for a long time to entrust his two sons to a Soviet boarding school. The father in question said that he taught his children to hunt game, to catch the polar fox and to ride reindeer. In school, he added, they would not learn all this, and when they had finished they would have no practical knowledge. An article in the *Teachers' Gazette* stated that there was a 'grain of truth' in the complaint of the old reindeer breeder. 'The school is indeed too much cut off from practice and thus not able to prepare children for the life in the Far North.'[16] A similar problem, it is true, also exists in other countries. Richard Finnie, in his book *Canada moves North*, says that Eskimo children, after spending years in boarding schools, return to their families unfitted for the lives they must lead.[17]

THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION

Whatever the quality of school education in the Russian Far North may be, it is a fact that the Soviet authorities have carried out a big cultural revolution in the native territories. The most important part of it has been the liquidation of illiteracy. Until 1931 the Far Northern and Far Eastern peoples could express themselves in writing only in the form of drawings or through the medium of the Russian language. In May, 1931, they received an alphabet of their own, the 'Unified Northern Alphabet' as it was called. It was officially approved by the Ministry of Education of the R.S.F.S.R. The 'Unified Northern Alphabet' was a Latin alphabet and the decision to adopt it was not taken without a long struggle fought out behind the scenes between the supporters of latiniza-